REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17, 19-26, 28-34, 37-45 and 47-52 remain in this application. Claims 2, 10, 18, 27, 36 and 46 have been canceled, and a portion of the recitations of each have been incorporated into their respective base claims; this action is taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Corresponding changes, and other formal changes, have been made to the other claims. In all, Claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 11-17, 19-26, 28-35, 37-45 and 47-52 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as his her their invention, in terms which distinguish over the art of record, and in particular to overcome the formal rejection. Claims 1, 9, 17, 25, 34 and 43 are independent.

An Information Disclosure Statement and a corresponding Form PTO-1449 were filed on March 21, 2003, a few days prior to issuance of the outstanding Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to return an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449, with his next communication.

The claims under examination were each rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from U.S. Patent 5,555,362 (Yamashita et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 6,356,314 (Takebe).

The invention relates to an electronic filing system of the type in which a reduced image can be formed and used in creating a list that can serve as an index to the contents of the filing system, but in which the conventional problems that occur due to the loss of resolution in the creation of such images, is avoided. In particular, as is discussed at

page 3, lines 19-24, the present invention is intended to provide the user with a system by means of which the user can easily identify the contents of a document, and distinguish that document, even from others having a similar layout.

Independent Claim 1 is directed to a reduced image forming apparatus that comprises dividing means, for dividing an original image into a plurality of image blocks, and extracting means, which are for extracting a plurality of partial images from each of the plurality of image blocks. Also provided are generating means, for combining the plurality of partial images extracted in this fashion and generating a combined image smaller than the original image, and indicating means indicating the combined image.

Applicant understands *Yamashita* as relating to a system by means of which a user can obtain a segmentation of, and ultimately a tree structure for, a given document that includes different types of content, such as text in fonts of different sizes, graphics, and the like. *Takebe* relates to a system in which it is possible to synthesize one image region P into a region Q of another image, even changing the size of the image in P by some suitable scale factor if necessary to fit it into region Q. Applicant cannot, however, agree with the motivation suggested in the Office Action for the proposed combination of *Yamashita* and *Takebe*.

The Office Action cites the discussion in the abstract of *Takebe* of being able to display a portion of an image within a specific display region as providing such motivation. Applicant notes, however, that when the user of the other system (the *Yamashita* system) views the automatically-provided proposed segmentation to see if it is

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acceptable, the various portions of the original image are displayed in the *same* relationship to each other that they have in the original image, and that feature is, in Applicant's view, necessary to allowing the user to make the desired determination. That is, if the segments were not displayed in the fashion just mentioned, the user would be unable to see whether the results of the segmentation processing make sense *vis-à-vis* of the original image. One of ordinary skill, therefore, would not at all be motivated to perform a reduction in display size of one of the segments, since doing so would, at best, interfere with the whole purpose of the user inspecting the results of the segmentation in *Yamashita*.

Moreover, in the segmentation process, the point is to divide the original image into portions that fit together to make up the original image. If one of these portions is displayed at a reduced scale, that portion will no longer fit together with the others in the required manner. That is, if one portion of the segmented image were displayed at a reduced size, then what the user would see is in some sense no longer a segmentation, since the segments do not actually fit together to make up the original image.

In addition, Applicant notes that when one of the divided images in the *Yamashita* system is reduced in the manner shown in *Takebe*, that divided image is no longer capable of being reconstructed. Applying the *Takebe* approach to the *Yamashita* system would, therefore, completely frustrate the purpose of the *Yamashita* system. Applicant strongly asserts that such a proposed combination of references is improper, as being one that one of only ordinary skill would certainly not contemplate.

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Also, even if such combination could be accepted as being a permissible one, Applicant notes that nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Yamashita* that would describe *extracting* partial images *from* each of plural divided images (even if it be deemed to describe dividing an image into partial images). *Yamashita*, therefore, would not suffice to lead one of ordinary skill to the feature of dividing an image into plural image blocks, *extracting* partial images from the blocks, and *combining the partial images* extracted in this way.

For these reasons, Applicant believes that Claim 1 is clearly allowable over *Yamashita* and *Takebe*, taken separately or in any permissible combination (if any would be possible).

Independent Claim 25 is directed to a reduced image forming apparatus which, similarly to Claim 1, comprises converting means, for converting an original image into a character train, and dividing means, for dividing the character train converted in this way into a plurality of character train blocks. Also provided are extracting means, which extract a partial character train from each of the character train blocks, and generating means, which combine a plurality of partial character trains extracted in this fashion, convert the combined partial character trains into an image, and generate a combined image smaller than the original image. The combined image is then indicated using indicating means.

Claim 25 is believed to be allowable over *Yamashita* and *Takebe* for at least the same reasons as is Claim 1.

The other independent claims are each a method or a computer-memory medium claim, respectively, corresponding to apparatus Claim 1 or 25, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with the apparatus claims.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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